

**THE DIFFERENCE OF SOCIAL STATUS REFLECTED IN  
CHARLES DICKENS' A *CHRISTMAS CAROL* NOVEL (1843):  
A MARXIST APPROACH**



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Pembimbing I

Pembimbing II

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**ABSTRACT**

*The major problem of this study is to reveal how the difference of social status is reflected in A Christmas Carol novel. The study focuses on the difference of social status. The objective of this study is to analyze the novel based on its structural elements and a marxist approach.*

*In analysis, the researcher uses qualitative method. The object of the study is A Christmas Carol novel written by Charles Dickens. The data sources consist of primary and secondary data sources. The primary data source is A Christmas Carol novel itself and the secondary data sources are the other sources related to the primary data such as the information about author's biography, information of England country, and the other relevant information to analyze of this research. The method of the data collection are reading the novel, browsing to the internet, indentifying the problem and the finding the data, taking notes the important data, arranging the data based on category of elements of literature review, and the last is drawing conclusion and suggestion based on the analysis of the data. The technique of data analysis is descriptive analysis.*

*The outcome of the study is shown in the following conclusion and suggestion. First, Charles Dickens wants to describe that miserly people, do not care with the poor and worship to money. Second, based on marxist analysis, Charles Dickens wants to reflect that the difference of social status that happens in a society is not problem because Christmas day is a happy day.*

*Key words: The Defference of Social Status, A Christmas Carol (1843),  
A Marxist Approach.*

## **A. Introduction**

### **1. Background of the Study**

*A Christmas Carol* novel that is written by Charles Dickens and published on December 19, 1843, by Chapman & Hall it consist of 138 pages (approximately 28,000 words). The original language used is English. *A Christmas Carol* is Charles Dickens novel of the most widely known. Novel air-setting Christmas it's been popular.

Dickens' beloved novella *A Christmas Carol* was written in 1843, with the intention of drawing readers' attention to the plight of England's poor. In the tale, Dickens stealthily combines a somewhat indirect description of hardships faced by the poor with a heart-rending, sentimental celebration of the Christmas season. The calloused character of the apathetic penny-pinching Ebenezer Scrooge, who opens his heart after being confronted by three spirits, remains one of Dickens' most widely recognized and popular creations.

Social status is a position in social relationships, characteristics that put the individual in relation to others and how much the role of the individual in society. Social status can be formed by several things including through the role of the individual, wealth, power and others. In Charles Dickens' novel was very influential social status because the story is lifted between the difference in status between the rich and the poor. Where the novel *A Christmas Carol*, one who has the power of the rich, a lot of money and a man of honor. The poor make them just a useless waste.

There are five basic assumption of Marxist approach, those are: (1) Dialectical Materialism is a concept which sees that conflict, antagonism or contradiction is condition that needed to reach some certain result (Elster, 2000: 47), (2) Historical materialism is a human being create their material lives (Selden, 1985: 24), (3) Class Struggle according to Cartel Marxist basically Man's social being determines his consciousness and the material interest of the dominant social class

determiner how all classes perceive their existence. All forms of culture therefore, do not exist in an ideal, abstract form but are inseparable from the historical determining social conditions (Carter, 2006: 55), (4) Alienation is happens both in world and human in passive and receptive as subjects which is separated from the object (Fargacs, 1986: 63), (5) Alienation is expressed in work and labor classification, where the labor cannot recognize himself as a result of the capitalist who master their product (Fromn, 2001: 63).

## **2. Literature Review**

The first writer, Susana Sunarsani (2002), entitled “*The Cold and Closed Heart Character of Ebenezer Scrooge*, The Main Character in Charles Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol*”, about focused on Ebenezer Scrooge as main character of the novel. The second researcher is Junastri Elfina R. Siahaan (2010), University of Sumatra Utara, entitled “*An Analysis of Moral Lesson in Charles Dickens’ A Christmas Carol*”. This research focused on analyzing moral through some major character concerns to human behavior as depiced in the novel *A Christmas Carol* for normative dose size.

## **3. Problem Statement**

The major problem of the study is: “How is the difference of social status reflected in Charles Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol* novel (1843)?”

## **4. Limitation of the study**

In this the research, the researcher will focus on the difference of social status reflected in Charles Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol* novel (1843)?”.

## **5. Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study:

- a. To analyze the structural elements of the novel.
- b. To analyze the novel based on Marxist Approach.

## **6. The Benefits of the study**

### **a. Theoretical Benefit**

It gives contribution to the larger body knowledge, particularly literary study in *A Christmas Carol* novel by Charles Dickens on A Marxist Approach.

### **b. Practical Benefit**

This study is expected to improve the researcher's understanding especially in Marxist Approach in Literature.

## **7. Theoretical Application**

After analyzing the theory of Marxist the researcher concludes that it is a form of society struggle to release themselves from all exploitation and operation, because different social classes. In order to make it easier in applying the Marxist theory, the writer takes the following steps:

- a. Identifying the character and characterization
- b. Describing the character and finding the clash of the problem.
- c. Examining special clue for any side, in the study, the researcher finds the characters name as prominence cue.
- d. Formulating all the obtained data in the story in the form of Marxist analysis.

## **B. Research Method**

### **1. Objective of the Study**

The object of the study is Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* novel published in England by Chapman & Hall 1843.

### **2. Type of the Data and the Data Source**

The type of data is text, while the data sources are divided into two kinds:

- a. The primary sources of data are the literary work itself that consist of words, phrase, and sentence.
- b. The secondary data source are takes from some books, websites, and other literary and other mattet that support this analysis.

### **3. The Technique of the Data Collection**

The technique of the data collection is library research, such as

- a. Reading the Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* novel in many times,
- b. Browsing to the internet.
- c. Indentifying the problem and finding the data.
- d. Taking the important note of important data, both primary and secondary data,
- e. Arranging the data into several parts according to its classification,
- f. Drawing conclusion and formulating suggestion.

### **4. Technique for Analyzing Data**

The technique used in analyzing the data is descriptive analysis.

## **C. Research Findings and Discussion**

After analyzing *A Christmas Carol* novel, the researcher finds the main research findings as follows:

## 1. Dialectical Materialism

In dialectical materialism, the history of society consists of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. Thesis is the first idea, concept or argument deals with the problem. It will encounter the second idea (antithesis). It is not only as the result in contradiction but also absorption of the characteristic both of them. Sometimes, people accept or maybe denying a thesis. They accept them as an argument, in the contrary, they deny them maybe as confirmation. Thesis and antithesis will formulate synthesis, in other words, it will be a solution of the contradiction between thesis and antithesis.

*A Christmas Carol* novel reflects the dialectical materialism. The difference in social status as the issues of this novel shows the first idea or thesis that comes from the arrogance of Ebenezer Scrooge. He shows off his richness and his high social with considering that Bob Cratchit is his clerk a poor man who is afraid of Scrooge.

‘Let me hear another sound from you,’ said Scrooge, ‘and you’ll keep your Christmas by losing your situation!’(ACC:10).

The special sentence that makes the writer interested in analysis this novel is the antithesis of the issue. The antithesis is the second idea or on the other hand is the response of the thesis before. In the novel, there is no struggle to defend the low social class. Bob Cratchit faces it calmly and his humbly. He never complaints or grumbles in the work and he remains care and remember of Scrooge.

Finally, synthesis comes to formulate thesis and antithesis. In this process Bob Cratchit’s life becomes better, he lives happily, because he gets a Christmas gift that is a big turkey, for his family at home.

## 2. Historical Materialism

The definition of historical materialism can be reflected in the story of *A Christmas Carol* novel. It is reflected in the form of character and



characterization, setting and plot. The character is divided into two group, the high social class and the low social class. In the novel, as the high social class is represented by Ebenezer Scrooge which is called merciless a creditor.

Ebenezer Scrooge, does not have good character. He is a conceited hearted man who always assumes that poor people are troublesome and useless. It can be seen from his dialogue with the portly gentleman:

‘If they would rather die, said Scrooge, they had better do it, and decrease the surplus population. Besides — excuse me — I don’t know that’(ACC: 13).

The historical materialism happens when each character performs their role becomes the oppressor because he treats Bob Cratchit and all people from lower class badly. It is shown in his attitude when he gives an order to Bob Cratchit without considering how difficult the order is.

The setting of *A Christmas Carol* novel also describes the group between the high social class and low social class. The high social in this novel is Ebenezer Scrooge. He lives in apartment. Apartment is private house of Ebenezer Scrooge, a very large house and occupied only with his assistant. While the lower class lives in Camden Town. The style is also expressed in Charles Dickens’s stylistic. High class, can be identified from sentence:

‘He dressed himself all in his best, and at last got out into the streets. The people were by this time pouring forth, as he had seen them with the Ghost of Christmas Present; and walking with his hands behind him, Scrooge regarded every one with a delighted smile’(ACC:132).

On the other hand, those who come lower class, like Bob Cratchit’s wife, have the simple life.

### 3. Class Struggle

Class struggle is a fundamental theory and as central part of marxism. It is a hypothesis used by Karl Marx to explain a invorment. Class struggle happens between two classes, there are the higher social class and the lower social status.

The class struggle will be done by a lower social class. In *A Christmas Carol* novel, the lower social class is Bob Cratchit. In the novel, Bob Cratchit has his own way to face the difference of social status. He is a patient and diligent father. He never wants to take a lot of money from everyone. He just wants to show that a low social class can be happy and always close with the family.

After that, Bob Cratchit has a reward for loyalty and patience during his work. At that time he is late for work after celebrating Christmas with his families. Scrooge pretends to be angry, but it is all just a lie, for the sake of giving a gift to Bob by raising his salary and he apologizes for all the mistakes and arrogance by celebrating Christmas together.

The good result precisely comes from Tiny Tim that makes Ebenezer Scrooge become his second father and Tiny Tim grows into a healthy child and full of joy.

‘Scrooge was better than his word. He did it all, and infinitely more; and to Tiny Tim, who did not die, he was a second father’(ACC: 137).

The good news is that the gentlemen gets many donation from Scrooge for the poor and destitute. It makes them help out of poverty, and everyone can celebrate Christmas with great affection and joy.

### 4. Alienation

The power and the authority of the upper class make the lower class be alienated and separated from, family, friend, self and aslo from the environment. In this novel, Bob Crachit is alienated by society.

Bob's family hates Scrooge in unrealistic reason. They call that Scrooge is unfeeling man.

'My dear, said Bob, the children. Christmas Day. It should be Christmas Day, I am sure, said she, on which one drinks the health of such an odious, stingy, hard, unfeeling man as Mr Scrooge. You know he is, Robert. Nobody knows it better than you do, poor fellow. My dear, was Bob's mild answer, Christmas Day. I'll drink his health for your sake and the Day's, said Mrs Cratchit, not for his. Long life to him. A merry Christmas and a happy new year. He'll be very merry and very happy, I have no doubt' (ACC: 82).

The other form of Alienation process here is Scrooge's not appreciating what Bob has done. Scrooge measures everything with money so that what has been done by his clerk is only measured with money, with no appreciation at all.

## **5. Revolution**

Revolution is a certain way to create a classless condition in society. In his statement, Karl Marx wants a social change which makes society a group of people that does not have a class.

As a of his calm, patient, and honest way to face the difference of social status, Bob gets many happiness and good results. Because of the three spirits that visit Scrooge has made a change for the generous and not concerned with social status.

'A merry Christmas, Bob, said Scrooge, with an earnestness that could not be mistaken, as he clapped him on the back. A merrier Christmas, Bob, my good fellow, than I have given you for many a year. I'll raise your salary, and endeavour to assist your struggling family, and we will discuss your affairs this very afternoon, over a Christmas bowl of smoking bishop, Bob. Make up the fires, and buy another coal-scuttle before you dot another i, Bob Cratchit'(ACC: 136).

The other revolution happens in Bob's life is that he was always obedient and submissive to his employer. Up to make his life change for the better because Scrooge raises his salary and always helps the poor in his city.

## Discussion

In this novel, Charles Dickens gives emphasis on the social condition of England at end of nineteenth century. There are the imbalances in social life into some groups. High social class (rich man) and low social class (employer). The low social class is Bob Cratchit, he is a clerk. He is just an employee in counting house, at Scrooge house. And the high social class is Scrooge who miserly

The special expression in this novel is Dickens expresses the other side of a response or an effort from the low social class to face the difference of social status. Bob Cratchit has his own way to face the difference of social status itself. He does not comment about his job. He always shows good attitude to other people.

From all of the responses, a sincere people would get the best gift from other people or other things. Bob never has the ambition or wants anything of Scrooge, he just wants to work well to meet his family. Until the end of what Bob Cratchit want it to be realized, Bob obtains happiness and lives well with the changes experienced by Scrooge.

Charles Dickens wants to give the other sense of life. There is an ambition to love a money. Scrooge does not care about the background of other people who borrow money to him. He never sees the social status differentiation as a big problem. But after he was visited by three spirits, he becomes generous and he decides to spend his money to donate to help the poor in the city.

Charles Dickens also wants to show the social status that happens in a society. There are the problems and solution. The most important thing is how to face the problem. In this case is how to face the difference of social status. Bob Cratchit choose the struggle the way has done; he solves his problem calmly, honestly, and sincerely. Whatever the background of social class, human being are equal in God view. As the result, Charles Dickens gives the resolution from the problem or the

climax problem. The way to face the difference makes Bob still have a better life.

Based on the analysis above, it is evident to state that the structural elements of the novel are matched with the main idea of Charles Dickens viewed from Marxist perspective.

#### **D. Conclusion and Suggestion**

##### **1. Conclusion**

After analyzing *A Christmas Carol* novel using Marxist analysis, the researcher comes to following conclusions:

First based on the structural analysis, *A Christmas Carol* novel as literary work has inseparable structure elements and they are related to each other and building a good unity. By *A Christmas Carol*, Charles Dickens wants to show that there is different social status happens in a society. *A Christmas Carol* also has a close relationship with the society of England society in the mid of the century. In his novel, Dickens gives responses, opinions, and sympathy to the social condition in that time.

Second, based on the Marxist analysis, *A Christmas Carol* novel describes the social status of London people in Christmas celebration that is eagerly anticipated by Christians from state England. The author wants to criticize English society at that time that lived in stratification by classifying the characters, the creditor on one hand and the proletariat on the other hand. In this novel, the creditor is represented by Ebenezer Scrooge and the proletariat by Bob Cratchit.

##### **2. Suggestion**

*A Christmas Carol* is an interesting novel to be analyzed. This novel also gives some morality value, and much different point of view of life. The researcher hoped that this research can be guidance for the student who wants to analyze *A Christmas Carol* novel.

After doing the research in *A Christmas Carol* novel using a marxist approach, the researcher invites the other researchers to conduct research in this literary work. This novel can be analyzed with the other issue for example Genetic Structuralism and Sociological. In Genetic Structuralism approach emphasizes not only on the literature of this novel but also its relationship with history. While in Sociological to be analyzed major character has exciting character in the novel. Finally, the researcher hopes that the study can be useful for the readers.

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